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ABSTRACT

The results of a survey in Sweden concerning the linguistic influences of English in that country are reported. Specifically, the spread and reception of three types of loans from English (direct, translation, and construction) are examined, as well as the use of the English plural and spelling with direct loans. The variables investigated include the respondents' acceptance of and willingness to use the loan types; responses to the choice of English spelling for specific words; and differences in sex, occupation, region, education, and age in relation to use of the loan types, English spelling, and English plurals. The survey results are charted and accompanied by narrative analysis. (MSE)

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ED279189

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ENGLISH IN SWEDEN

1. Ever since the second world war, Sweden and other western countries have been exposed to an ever-increasing cultural and linguistic influence from the English-speaking countries. The aim of the English in Sweden Project (EIS) is to study the extent of the linguistic influence and - if possible- to discover its main sources and channels. In the present study I will account for some of the result from EIS, in particular the spread and reception of some of the commonest manifestations of this linguistic influence, i.e. the direct loans (DL), the translation loans (TL), the construction loans (CL), and the use of English plural and spelling with the direct loans.

The material that will form the basis of the discussion consists of responses to a questionnaire submitted to 1953 Swedes in 1981-82. Most of the questionnaires were sent by mail, but a number of them were used in interviews in Stockholm and Göteborg, at which recordings of the pronunciation of direct loans were also made. The original plan was to keep the results from these two procedures distinct: the interviews were meant to furnish material for a more penetrating study of the big cities. However, since neither approach yielded a higher response rate than about 40 %, I chose to lump together the results from both. This means that no claim can be made for representativeness in a strict sense for the country as a whole. However, since the vast amount of material at our disposal is not strikingly out of proportion with the distribution of social categories in the country as a whole, it is still possible to get a general idea of the reception and use of the different types of influence from English and to study the co-variation between the responses and social characteristics.

2. Before I proceed it may not be out of place to say a few words about the structure of the questionnaire, the principles behind the selection of examples and the general methodology used.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts, one concerned with questions about contacts with English in Sweden - type and frequency of contact, topic, etc. - the other with attitudes and willingness to use certain specific examples of the influence from English. The greater part of the linguistic questions concern the three types of loan mentioned previously: DL, CL and TL. With very few exceptions, the examples of these that were used all occurred

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in writing in Swedish written material (mostly daily newspapers) between 1980 and 1981. Certain general principles were used in choosing the examples, in particular the requirements that each item should belong to normal, everyday language, and that no item must appear in the most recent edition of the word-list of the Swedish Academy (SAOL). As for the choice of examples for the questions on spelling and the plural, exceptions were made from the second requirement, since I wanted to find out whether older loans had been subject to a 'reanglification' process with respect to spellings and choice of plural suffix.

The DL, TL and CL were all tested in the same manner: for each example (they were all contextualized), the subjects were asked whether they could understand it, whether they accepted it as normal Swedish, and if they themselves were willing to use it. The response options were 'yes', 'no', 'don't know'. Plurals and spellings were tested with multiple choice questions.

There are obviously certain problems connected with the translation loans and the construction loans, the main one being that, strictly speaking, it is impossible to prove that suspected instances of these types are in fact derived from English originals. Thus while it is impossible to deny that e.g. fan, pellet, You're welcome are of English origin, we can only suspect that constructions such as Från här är det inte långt hem, Lämna en blank sida, Han är en läkare are of English-language descent. A further problem is that there are probably two somewhat different kinds of judgement involved as we proceed from questions about DLs to CLs and TLs. Everybody realizes that the DLs are in fact English in origin; with TLs and CLs, however, awareness of the origin of the loans will be tied to personal characteristics such as degree of education.

3. Let us now proceed to a presentation of the response rates obtained for DL, CL and TL. I will disregard responses to questions about understanding and concentrate for the time being on questions concerning acceptance (ACC) and willingness to use (USE) the examples. As a general measure of ACC and USE I will use the means for positive response for each linguistic category (i.e. DL, TL and CL) recalculated as percentages of the maximum theoretical score. Thus in ACCDL - i.e. all the questions concerning the acceptability of direct loans - for example, there are 24 examples in all. We reward each positive response with one point, add up the totals for each example, divide the resulting sum by the number of subjects and obtain the mean for that category. The mean - in the case of ACCDL 11.98 - is then recalculated as a percentage of the highest theoretically possible response

total, i.e. the total we would have obtained if all the participants had given positive response to all 24 questions. In the case of ACCDL this gives a percentage of just below 50. Performing the same calculations on the remaining linguistic categories, we obtain the results in the table below.

	ACC	USE
TL	60 %	49 %
CL	53 %	40 %
DL	50 %	39 %

Table 1. Overall distribution of TL, DL and CL.

As was to be expected, the values for ACC are consistently higher than those for USE, but in both the ranking of the loans is the same: TL leads CL and DL by about 10 %. The difference between the percentage for CL and DL is so small as to be negligible.

It would lead too far to go into detail about the ratings of the individual examples and I will therefore content myself here with a few examples to demonstrate the spread of percentages. Among the TLs we find that leva upp till ('live up to') received an ACC rating of 92 % and a USE rating of 87 %: corresponding figures for Ha en trevlig dag ('Have a nice day') and ett måste ('a must') are 90 and 84 in both cases, while e.g. köpa ett argument ('buy an argument') received 46 % and 31 % respectively.

Among the construction loans we find that den största svenska segern någonsin ('the biggest Swedish victory ever') receives 92 % under ACC, 88 under USE, while Han är en läkare ('He is a doctor') gets 46 % ACC and 35 % USE. Among the DL finally, blackout receives 84 % ACC and 82 % USE, testa att springa utan skor ('test running without shoes') receives 84 and 78 % and Sorry, men jag tror dig inte ('Sorry but I don't believe you') draws 55 and 45 under ACC and USE respectively.

4. I turn now to a presentation of the co-variation between response means and social characteristics like sex, age, occupation, education and region. From now on I will include only the USE responses, since there are virtually no differences between ACC and USE except that the values for the former are invariably higher that those for the latter.

Let us first consider the distribution of positive responses over sexes:

	TL	CL	DL
MALE	50 %	43 %	40 %
FEMALE	47 %	38 %	38 %

Table 2. Sex differences in the use of TL, DL and CL.

Both sexes follow the general trend for TL to be roughly 10 per cent higher than DL and CL. There is a consistent tendency for women to score lower than the men: the differences are small but statistically significant.[1] This is well in accord with earlier observations about male and female language where it has been noted that women tend more than men to conform to the standards of linguistic correctness set by society.[2]

The next social variable to be considered is occupation. The results of the cross-tabulation will be found in Table 3 below.

	TL	CL	DL
Businessmen	50 %	42 %	38 %
Professionals	48 %	37 %	38 %
Students	49 %	41 %	44 %
Workers	51 %	42 %	39 %

Table 3. Occupational differences in the use of TL, CL and DL

There are no sensational differences in Table 3. Perhaps the most surprising finding is that workers are in the lead in two categories and in second place in the third. Professionals are consistently lowest; the difference that may have been expected between students and others does not materialize until we reach DL.

Table 4 below presents the differences in responses obtained in a number of different regions in Sweden. Before we present the figures, a few words must be said about the classification used. Following a suggestion by SCB[3], we have divided the country into seven regions in accordance with density of population. These seven regions are Stockholm (STHLM), Göteborg (GBG),

Malmö (MALMÖ), municipalities with more than 90000 inhabitants within 30 kilometres of the centre (TOWNS), municipalities with between 27000 and 89999 inhabitants within 30 kilometres of the centre and with more than 300000 people within 100 kilometres of the centre (SST = Small southern towns), municipalities with between 27000 and 89999 inhabitants within 30 kilometres of the centre and fewer than 300000 people within 100 kilometres of the centre (SNT = Small northern towns), municipalities with fewer than 27000 inhabitants (SPARSE = Sparsely populated areas). As the labels chosen show, there is also a strong geographical element in this classification: towns with between 27000 and 89999 inhabitants and 300000 within 100 kilometres are only found in the south of Sweden, towns with fewer than 300000 people within 100 kilometres of the centre are, by and large, confined to the Norrland coastal strip (although SNT does cover Öland and Gotland as well), TOWNS includes all middle-sized towns in an area extending from Skåne to Gävle, Falun, Sundsvall, and SPARSE covers the interior of Norrland, north Värmland and Dalarna, and a few places in Småland. Table 4 below gives the distribution of positive responses over regions.

	STHLM	GBG	MALMÖ	TOWNS	SST	SNT	SPARSE
TL	48 %	49 %	49 %	50 %	50 %	47 %	52 %
CL	37 %	39 %	38 %	41 %	41 %	39 %	43 %
DL	40 %	39 %	43 %	38 %	39 %	32 %	38 %

Table 4. Differences between regions in the use of TL, CL and DL.

The table shows that, although the differences are mostly small, there is a tendency for DL to be more used in the three big cities than in other areas, while the reverse is true of CL and TL. We also note that Malmö is the area most willing to use DL and that there is a conspicuous difference in the DL percentage for SNT and all other areas: in fact the DL differences between SNT and all other regions are statistically significant at the 95 % level of confidence.

The fourth social variable considered is education. Here the subjects were divided into four classes in accordance with completed education: no completed education (NCE), completed primary education (CP), completed secondary education (CS) and completed university education (CU). These classes are cross-tabulated against TL, CL and DL in the table below.

	TL	CL	DL
NCE	49 %	40 %	42 %
CP	49 %	41 %	38 %
CS	50 %	41 %	42 %
CU	47 %	35 %	36 %

Table 5. Educational differences in the use of TL, CL and DL.

The table above seems to express much the same message as Table 3, i.e. the fact that social respectability and willingness to use English loans are inversely proportionate, thus, while NCE, CB and CS are by and large similar in their treatment of the loans, CU scores consistently lower on all loans. The difference between CU and the other categories is statistically significant at the 95 % level except in the case of the CP percentage under DL.

There now remains only one social variable, viz. age. With regard to age, subjects were divided into the following six groups: TEEN (15-19), YOUNG (20-34), MID (35-49), MIDPLUS (50-64), SENIOR (65-69) and OLD (70-). The last group had so few members that it has been disregarded. Table 6 shows the percentages for the age groups.

	TEEN	YOUNG	MID	MIDPLUS	SENIOR
TL	51 %	54 %	49 %	43 %	42 %
CL	43 %	45 %	37 %	35 %	33 %
DL	46 %	45 %	37 %	30 %	27 %

Table 6. Age-related differences in responses to TL, CL and DL.

There is one very clear lesson to be learnt from Table 6: it is the under 35s who are most willing to use loans of all categories. It is interesting to note that in two categories out of three, it is YOUNG that is in the lead rather than TEEN: a closer examination of these two groups revealed that the incidence of 'don't know' answers for TEEN was considerably higher than for YOUNG (and indeed for any other group except OLD). It also emerges from the table above that the three types of loan have different

polarizing power: the difference between highest and lowest under DL is 19, for CL 15 and for TL 9: we may also note that these differences are greater than in any other social variable. The next greatest difference occurs in REGION, where the highest-lowest difference under DL is 8 %. If we compare the three loan categories with regard to discriminatory power, TL turns out to be lowest, with CL and DL rather even but with a slight edge for DL (except in the case of sex, where DL shows the smallest difference).

So far we have discussed each social variable in isolation, creating the impression that these variables lead independent lives, as it were. But this is obviously false: after all, these variables all measure different characteristics in the same population and are bound to interact in a number of ways. Moreover it seems highly likely that certain of the variables are much more important in determining attitudes towards loans than others. Determining how to assess the different contributions of the social variables is not altogether easy. One step in this direction is to subject the material to an analysis of variance. Before bringing this section to a close I will show the results of such an analysis with TL, CL and DL as dependent variables and the social variables as independent. In this type of analysis we investigate the probability that a certain independent variable influences decisions concerning the dependent variables. The table below shows, for each of TL, CL and DL, which social variables are most likely to influence willingness to use the constructions in question.[4]

	CL	DL	TL
Age	+	+	+
Occupation	+	+	+
Education	+	+	-
Region	+	+	-
Sex	+	-	+

Table 7. Social variables influencing the use of TL, CL and DL.

6. I will now turn to a presentation of the responses to the questions concerning choice of plural ending and spelling for direct loans incorporated into Swedish. The means of these categories, transformed into percentages, are 62 % for the plurals and 40 % for English spelling. It will be remembered that the questions used here were all of the multiple choice type, which means that the answers on these questions may be taken to correspond to the USE responses for the other questions. As the table below shows, there is considerable variation both with regard to spelling and plurals: just as with the questions concerning TLs, CLs and DLs, one has the feeling that, if we chose our examples a little differently, we would also get results that were quite different.

English Spelling		English Plural	
drive	94 %	loafer	85 %
speed	91 %	supporter	65 %
juice	90 %	hearing	63 %
breed	30 %	blackout	59 %
single	15 %	tiebreak	53 %
fake	11 %	baby	42 %
tight	8 %	scarf	40 %
mop	4 %	party	29 %

Table 7. Positive responses to the choice of English spelling and plurals

No doubt a more ambitious study of these categories would reveal linguistic principles along which choices are made However, as the examples speed (91 %) and breed (30 %) show, finding these principles would not be an easy matter and we would no doubt find that there are equally important non-linguistic factors with a bearing on the choice of spelling and plural, like the age and meaning of the loan. As with the other loans it is more rewarding, therefore, to study the relationship between choice of spelling and plural on the one hand and social characteristics on the other. These relationships will become apparent in the tables below.

	English Spelling	English Plural
MALE	24 %	57 %
FEMALE	32 %	62 %

Table 7. Sex differences in the choice of English spelling and plurals

	English Spelling	English Plural
Businessmen	30 %	56 %
Professionals	43 %	66 %
Students	31 %	59 %
Workers	29 %	52 %

Table 8. Occupation-related differences in the choice of English spelling and plurals

	STHLM	GBG	MALMÖ	TOWNS	SST	SNT	SPARSE
English spelling	32 %	33 %	33 %	30 %	29 %	32 %	30 %
English plural	61 %	64 %	60 %	58 %	57 %	60 %	52 %

Table 9. Regional differences in the choice of English spelling and plurals

	English Spelling	English Plural
NCE	33 %	52 %
CP	29 %	55 %
CS	32 %	63 %
CV	35 %	66 %

Table 10. Education-related differences in the choice of English spelling and plurals

	English Spelling	English Plural
TEEN	32 %	54 %
YOUNG	30 %	60 %
MID	33 %	62 %
MIDPLUS	30 %	62 %
SENIOR	29 %	61 %

Table 11. Age-related differences in the choice of English spelling and plurals

As the tables above show, the plural is on the whole a more powerful social discriminator than spelling. Thus the span between highest and lowest percentage for the English plurals is greater than that for English spelling in all the social variables but one, viz. sex. The social variable that is most sensitive to English spelling and plural is occupation and this is also the only case when the highest-lowest difference is as great for spelling as it is for plural. Age, which was such an important factor for TL, CL and DL, has lost considerably in importance when it comes to choosing spelling and plural. In view of this, it does not seem unreasonable to regard the use of TL, CL, DL as age-related and the choice of plural and spelling as occupation-related.

The second most important influence for the choice of plural is region, where there is a 12 % gap between Göteborg at the top and SPARSE at the bottom. That of course triggers the suspicion that Göteborg and SPARSE differ with regard to occupation, a suspicion that turns out to be justified. The proportion of professionals in Göteborg is 55 % while it is 45 % for SPARSE. We also find that the women in Göteborg make up 52 % of the total population, while in SPARSE they are only 43 %. However, application of analysis of variance for the spelling and the plural indicates that for the choice of English plurals, all social variables are important. For the choice of English spelling, on the other hand, only occupation and education are significantly related to the spelling preferences.

7. Now that we have investigated both the reception of the different types of loan and the choice between English and Swedish spelling and plurals, a natural thing to do is to compare the two with respect to the social variables that carry most weight in influencing the reactions of the subjects.

Such a comparison has in fact been made on a somewhat smaller sample in Ljung 1982 and the findings of that study are confirmed in the present one. The main discovery in Ljung 1982 was that there occurs a 'cross-over' as we move from the choice of plural to willingness to use DLs, TLs and CLs. Thus the social groups that score highest on the plural, drop to the lowest or second lowest position under DL and remain there or drop even lower under DL and CL, while the social groups with the lowest score under plural, rise to successively higher positions as we proceed from plural to DL, TL and CL. The effect of this cross-over can be schematically described as in Figure 1 below.

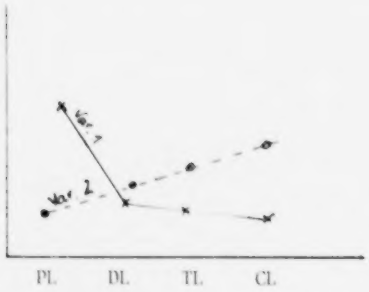

Fig. 1. Schematic illustration of the cross-over phenomenon.

As we have already mentioned, the results are confirmed by the present study: under occupation, for example, professionals score 60 % for English plural, while workers reach a mere 52 %. These roles are reversed under DL where professionals score 38 %, workers 39 %; the gap widens under TL - 48 % vs. 51 % - and culminates under CL with 37 % for the professionals and 42 % for the workers.

I speculated in the 1982 study that the reason for the cross-over might have to do with social standing: the choice of the 'correct' - i.e. the English-plural is important to those groups in society who have an interest in linguistic correctness, but less important to those who do not. By the same token, the use of loans would be more offensive to those with a stake in linguistic correctness than to those who do not have such interests. I still think that this may be true, but it remains to be explained why DLs should have less discriminatory power than TLs and CLs. However, I do not want to pursue that particular argument any further here. Instead I will

bring this study to a close by presenting some of the results obtained in in a development of the investigations reported so far.

One of the drawbacks of the present study is that the use of the labels TL, CL and DL tends to create the impression that the groups of examples that they stand for are highly homogeneous. But this is not so. In fact considerable linguistic diversity was built into these groups from the very beginning since, in my choice of examples, I tried to cover as many types of loan as possible. In TL a distinction was made between words (TLW) and phrases (TLP), in CL there is a difference between syntactic influence (CLSYNT) and influence on word-formation (CLWF), and among the DLs, finally, I include both words (DLW) and phrases (DLP). Members of these categories may be either assimilated (ASS) or nor assimilated (NASS). By assimilated words I mean words adapted to Swedish by the use of affixes, compounding and the like. By 'assimilated phrase' I mean phrases that are part and parcel of otherwise Swedish sentences, as in e.g. Keep smiling bara, det ordnar sig. In the table below I have ranked these new linguistic categories in accordance with their means in order to get a more detailed picture of the reception of English loans.

TLW	57 %
CLSYNT	50 %
TLP	47 %
DLWASS	46 %
DLWNASS	43 %
CLWF	30 %
DLPASS	29 %
DLPNASS	21 %

Table 12. Overall distribution of the new linguistic categories.

As I have remarked earlier, we should not put too much faith in ranking lists based on a very limited amount of material. Nevertheless we can note, for what it is worth, that the TLs keep their top position, that there is a dramatic difference between syntactic CLs and word-formational CLs and that it is the phrases that are responsible for the bottom position of DL in Table 1.

What then is the connection between the attitudes concerning these new categories and the five social variables? For a start, let us look at the results of an analysis of variance. We find the following pattern:

	AGE	EDUC	OCC	SEX	REGION
DLWASS	+	+	+	+	+
CLSYNT	+	+	+	+	+
DLPNASS	+	+	+	+	+
DLWNASS	+	+	+	–	+
CLWF	+	+	+	+	–
DLPASS	+	+	+	+	–
TLW	+	+	+	–	–
TLP	+	–	–	–	

Table 13. Social variables significantly involved in use of loans.

As the table shows, there are considerable differences in the number of social variables involved in the use of the different loan-types. However, we are not told in what way they are involved. In an attempt to throw some light on that question, I arranged the table below which plots the eight types of loan against these social factors where means for the loan-type in question were significantly higher than the overall mean. (Values from variables not deemed influential in the analysis of variance have been excluded).

	CLSYNT	DLPNASS	CLWF	TLW	DLWASS	DLWNASS	DLPASS	TLP
YOUNG	+	+	+	+	+	+	–	+
TEEN	+	+	+	+	+	–	+	+
STUD	+	+	+	+	+	–	–	–
BUSI	+	+	+	+	–	–	–	–
WORKER	+	+	+	+	–	–	–	–
CS	–	–	+	+	+	+	–	–
MALE	+	–	+	–	+	–	–	–
NCE	+	+	–	–	–	–	+	–
TOWNS	+	+	–	–	–	–	–	–
CP	–	–	–	+	+	–	–	–
MID	–	–	–	–	–	+	–	+
MALMO	–	–	–	–	+	+	–	–
SPARSE	+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
SST	+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
STHLM	–	+	–	–	–	–	–	–
GBG	–	+	–	–	–	–	–	–
ITEM	–	+	–	–	–	–	–	–
PROFESS	–	–	–	–	–	+	–	–
CU	–	–	–	–	–	–	+	–

Table 13. Social factors significantly related to willingness to use loans.

It is difficult to detect any clear tendencies in Table 13. Still, let me venture a few generalizations. It appears that, while young speakers are willing to use basically any loans, there is a tendency for non-professionals, males and people outside the big cities to be more in favour of the construction loans than others. The professionals and the middle-aged favour unassimilated English words, while unassimilated English phrases are the only favourites of Stockholm and Göteborg. More definite conclusions will have to await a statistical analysis of the relations between the social variables.

NOTES

1. Here and elsewhere in this paper, the significance of a difference between two observed sample proportions has been determined by means of confidence intervals for proportions (see Wonnacott and Wonnacott 1977:3-6, 223-244). The confidence level has been set at 95 %.

2. See, for instance, Trudgill 1974:93-94.

3. In Folkmängden 31 dec. 1979.

4. The level of confidence chosen for the probability measurement is 95 %.

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